

A detailed marble sculpture of a woman, likely a personification of a virtue or deity, shown in profile. She has an elaborate, braided hairstyle and is holding a large, ornate vessel (possibly a cornucopia or a large bowl) above her head with her right arm. The sculpture is set against a dark background, highlighting its intricate details and the smooth texture of the marble.

# LEONHARD KERN

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A NEWLY DISCOVERED  
MASTERPIECE



A NEWLY DISCOVERED  
MASTERPIECE BY  
LEONHARD KERN

HERCULES  
AND  
HIPPOLYTA

Leonhard Kern, Hercules and Hippolyta,  
c.1615-20, alabaster, height 82 cm

Provenance:  
possibly made for Frederick V (1596-1632), Elector Palatine and King of Bohemia  
Collection Dr. Wolfgang Hofstätter, Vienna  
Hofgalerie Ulrich Hofstätter, Vienna  
Collection Prof. René Clemencic, Vienna





## **Preface and Acknowledgements**

The artist Leonhard Kern is one of the great sculptors of the Baroque period whose works find their way to the Kunsthandlung Julius Böhler time and again. That was the case in 2000 when Tony Blumka and I first exhibited works under the title 'Treasures of the Past' in the Blumka Gallery's magnificent rooms in New York. I took a newly discovered, monogrammed alabaster relief with me to New York – an 'Entombment', which can now be admired in the Metropolitan Museum.

Our research at that time revealed that Kern was especially famous for works carved in ivory. Works in alabaster were generally only known to experts in the field.

The scholarly analysis of three alabaster reliefs from Kern's early period by Dr. Virginie Spenlé, published in a catalogue for Kunstkammer Georg Laue on the occasion of TEFAF Maastricht 2016, successfully made this aspect of the materials used by Kern in his œuvre better known to a wider spectrum of collectors. The support of the whole Kunstkammer team and Georg Laue himself in particular has proved extremely helpful in our work on this publication.

In early 2016 we were able to acquire a figure group by Leonhard Kern, also made of alabaster, depicting 'Hercules and Hippolyta'. For the research and the editing of the text I would like to thank most sincerely my team – Eva Bitzinger and Julia Scheid. The work together with our excellent photographer Andreas Huber, that lasted several days, have enabled me to experience the ingeniousness of the artist Leonhard Kern once again from a completely different aspect.

I would like to thank my colleague Uli Hofstätter from Vienna for the very careful and thoughtful management of the restoration work.

It is exciting for me to see events come full circle after 17 years and to be able to present you now this outstanding and unique work in Kern's œuvre together with my business partner and friend Tony Blumka.

Florian Eitle-Böhler

Starnberg, February 2017





# The Discovery of an Important Early Work

## Hercules and Hippolyta

### Leonhard Kern – ‘one of the most famous German artists’

In the first history of German art published in 1675 – *Teutsche Academie der Edlen Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste* – the artists’ biographer Joachim von Sandrart describes his contemporary Leonhard Kern as ‘one of the most famous German artists’.<sup>1</sup> His many works in the art collections and cabinets of curiosities of the nobility and the bourgeoisie in his day testify to Kern’s importance as a sculptor.<sup>2</sup> Apart from a few monumental sculptures made on commission<sup>3</sup> his œuvre mostly comprises small sculptures in ivory, alabaster and wood. The artist-entrepreneur produced these with great success for royal collections and a new market that was emerging among the increasingly moneyed and influential middle-class. This was not to be taken for granted at the time as, during the Thirty Years’ War, the situation for a freelance artist working without the protection of a court, was often difficult. Throughout his life, Leonhard Kern travelled extensively to meet collectors and potential customers. Kern had a sales room adjoining the workshop in his house in Schwäbisch Hall where he lived from 1620 onwards, so that passing travellers could view and purchase his works.<sup>4</sup>

Most of the details known about the life of Leonhard Kern (1588-1662), his apprenticeship and years as a journeyman come from the obituary written upon his death.<sup>5</sup>

Kern comes from a family of craftsmen in the third generation: both his grandfather and father are stonemasons and foremen in Forchtenberg where Leonhard’s elder brother, Michael, has run a successful sculpture workshop since 1607.<sup>6</sup> Leonhard, one of seven children, is the only one to attend the Hohenlohesches Gymnasium, the grammar school in Oehringen. He leaves school in 1603 at the age of fourteen and enters the workshop run by his brother, Michael, who by this time has moved temporarily to Würzburg.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Joachim von Sandrart, *Teutsche Academie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste*, Frankfurt am Main, 1675, Nuremberg 1975, p. 343; cited in Schwäbisch Hall 1988, p. 15. The publication by Elisabeth Grünenwald, *Leonhard Kern. Ein Bildhauer des Barock* of 1969, provides fundamental information on the work of Leonhard Kern. This publication draws on the work ‘Die Monumentalwerke der Bildhauerfamilie Kern’ of 1917 by Gertrud Gradmann. The catalogue of works for the exhibition in Schwäbisch Hall in 1988 was also edited by E. Grünenwald, a number of contributions supplement the classification of Kern’s works. The most recent publication by Virginie Spénlé of 2016 throws light on Kern’s early work and includes unknown works now attributed to him. We would like to thank her most sincerely for the many leads she supplied on Leonhard Kern and for her assistance in tracing illustrated material.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Grünenwald 1969, p. 10, esp. footnotes 42-46: 8 objects alone are listed in the inventory of the art collector Elias Brackenhoffer of Strasbourg. On 9 July 1626 Kern mentions that he had been “to Nuremberg 3 weeks previously and delivered ten pictures that a merchant had ordered from me 11 months earlier for a cardinal at the Imperial Court”; on 10 January 1627 he records the sale of a crucifix to a Spaniard.

<sup>3</sup> The four figures of 1617 for the gable of the City Hall in Nuremberg are now in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg; cf. Grünenwald 1969 no. 83, plate 1; the figures of Faith, Love, Hope and Justice, from c. 1632 for the Old City Hall in Regensburg are now in the City Hall and the Städtisches Museum Regensburg, Grünenwald 1969 no. 90 and plates 36, 37.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Beutter 1988, p. 18. Kern’s house was located on a busy thoroughfare near the coaching inn and a tavern.

<sup>5</sup> The obituary in the church records in Hall, dated 6 April 1662, is published in Grünenwald, 1969, p. 7, note 5.

<sup>6</sup> Forchtenberg 1998, pp. 33-101, entry on Michael Kern by Vera Schneider 1998, esp. p. 36; in 1607 Michael settles in Forchtenberg with his wife Christina from Würzburg.

<sup>7</sup> “... anno 1603 aber nacher Würzburg zu seinem Bruder (Michael d.J.) kommen, allda die Bildhauerkunst erlernet ...” Gradmann already points out that this is difficult to imagine. According to our sources, Michael Kern had already been working permanently in Würzburg since 1605. It was not until 21 December 1606 that he was accepted as a master craftsman in the ‘St. Lukas Bruderschaft’ guild. It would seem improbable that he would have been allowed to teach apprentices in 1603 when he himself was a journeyman. Irrespective of this, Leonhard would certainly have gained his skill as a sculptor from his father as well as his brother.



Fig. 1: Giovanni da Bologna (Douai 1529-1608 Florence), called Giambologna, *Sleeping Nymph with Satyr*, Florence before 1587, bronze, 31.5 x 34 cm, Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Grünes Gewölbe, inv. no. IX 34.

Leonhard Kern is one of the few sculptors of his age to spend his journeyman years in Italy. In early 1609 he travels to Rome<sup>8</sup> and later to Naples. Kern's yearning for adventure is testified by his boarding a Florentine galley that takes him to Mauritania in West Africa which, at that time, was an exceptionally unusual destination. On returning to Naples he goes back to Rome again where he stays for two years. He attends an art academy and works from life, and studies antiquity and contemporary sculpture as well as architecture. These years of study are to have a strong influence on his later work. This is supported by a letter of 1626 addressed to the chamberlain of the House of Oettingen. He writes that he is working on a crucifix from life, "... based on a living, well-toned man ... whom I have bound and hung on a cross and am working on a crucifix made of ivory 16 inches high using such a model."<sup>9</sup>

In addition, Kern closely studies sculpture from antiquity in particular. In Rome at that time he most probably sees the *Laocoön Group*, the *Apollo of the Belvedere*, the *Sleeping Ariadne* and the *Farnese Hercules*. He will certainly have visited Michelangelo's Tomb of Pope Julius II with the figure of Moses (1513). Like other artists of the day he presumably sketches these sculptures or at least acquires engravings or even miniature bronzes of these figures.

<sup>8</sup> This has been deduced from the years that Leonhard was not in Forchtenheim: these are 1606, 1610-13, 1617, 1619. Cf. Grünenwald 1969, p. 8, and notes 18 and 21 in which it is assumed that Leonhard would have left at a favourable time of year, i.e. spring 1609. Journey time to Rome, c. 2 months, from there to Naples soon afterwards, where he spent 9 months. He is back in Rome again in spring 1610 where he stays for 2 years, i.e. until 1612 and visits the academy. In December 1613 he receives payment for the reliefs in Ljubljana on which he had worked for several months. From his departure from Rome in spring 1612 until his arrival in Ljubljana in summer 1613 leaves Leonhard Kern with a period of 12 months to visit other Italian cities such as Florence, Padua and Venice.

<sup>9</sup> Gradmann 1917, p. 200; Grünenwald 1969 p. 16, note 110.





Fig. 2: Leonhard Kern, *Sleeping Nymph*, c.1615-1620, alabaster, 26.5 x 45 cm, Neuenstein Castle, Hohenlohe Museum, inv. no. NL 76.

On his return journey to Germany Kern stops in Venice from where he crosses to Dalmatia. In Ljubljana in present-day Slovenia the Prince-Bishop Thomas Chrön commissions him to carve a relief for an altarpiece dedicated to the Virgin Mary for a church in Gornji Grad. The Prince-Bishop is so delighted by its execution that he wants to commission the artist to work on other works. Kern turns down this offer because “he has no desire to stay there for religion’s sake”.<sup>10</sup> He is a Lutheran, whereas Chrön is a representative of the Catholic Counter Reformation. In 1614 Leonhard returns to Forchtenberg where he marries the daughter of the local scribe at his parents’ request.

Leonhard Kern completes his years of study and as a journeyman at the age of 26. He probably initially works once again in Michael’s flourishing workshop, his brother having returned to Forchtenberg as well. The Kern’s have rights to quarry alabaster found locally. In a letter dated 22 February 1610 Count Wolfgang of Hohenlohe-Weikersheim offers Michael Kern a permanent position at court.<sup>11</sup> The return of his brother after studying in Italy certainly would have been welcomed by Michael. Unfortunately, no sourced reports or signed works are known that tell us anything about Leonhard’s work during this period. In all events, he is familiar with many motifs that are popular at that time among collectors and artists in Germany from first-hand experience. These include the subject of the *Sleeping Nymph*. In 1587 a bronze of the nymph from Giambologna’s workshop is mentioned in the Elector’s collection in Dresden (fig. 1).<sup>12</sup> Kern makes several small-format sculptures of this motif<sup>13</sup> that would suggest that these are much sought-after by collectors. One copy of the ‘*Sleeping Nymph*’ is to be found today in the Hohenlohe Museum in Neuenstein Castle (fig. 2).

<sup>10</sup> obituary: „...er aber der Religion halben kein Lust zu verbleiben gehabt.“

<sup>11</sup> Schneider 1998, p. 37.

<sup>12</sup> Avery 1993, cat. no. 64, p. 260; this version may have been taken to Dresden as a present of Francesco I Medici on the occasion of his visit in 1587. Another version was in the possession of the brother of Francesco I, Cardinal Ferdinando Medici, in Rome in 1584.

<sup>13</sup> Spenlé 2016, p. 41.

## Leonhard Kern and Giambologna

In this masterly sculpture *Hercules and Hippolyta* Kern picks up on Giambologna's work – *The Rape of a Sabine* (figs. 4, 5). This figure group was publically displayed in Florence in 1583 and caused a sensation. Giambologna regarded this masterpiece “purely as a compositional exercise in integrating three figures into an action group, a challenge to [his] imaginative powers and technical virtuosity.”<sup>14</sup> The three figures have been worked from one single piece of marble. In an intensely dramatic fashion they twist upwards around their own axis. In art literature this type of sculpture is referred to as a *figura serpentinata*. Michelangelo similarly grappled with the idea of a group of three figures in marble that was however never executed.

The public installation of the Sabines on the most prominent square in Florence, the Piazza della Signoria in front of the Palazzo Vecchio in the immediate vicinity of Michelangelo's *David*, caused a furore. However, “the most significant reaction to Giambologna's great formal ambition ... came ... from among the ranks of other artists.”<sup>15</sup> Virtually no other contemporary sculpture has been reproduced so quickly in the form of small bronzes and engravings while retaining its importance for hundreds of years (fig. 3).



Fig. 3: Andrea Andreani (Mantua c. 1540-after 1611),  
Rape of a Sabine, after Giambologna, 1585,  
chiaroscuro woodcut, New York, The Metropolitan  
Museum of Art, inv.no. 22.73.3-70.

<sup>14</sup> Avery 1993, pp. 109, 254, no. 12.

<sup>15</sup> Zikos 2006, p. 59: “Die bedeutendste Reaktion auf die hochgesteckten formalen Ambitionen Giambolognas ... kam aus den Reihen der Künstler selbst.“





Fig. 4: Giovanni da Bologna (Douai 1529-1608 Florence), called Giambologna, Rape of a Sabine, 1581–82, marble, height 410 cm, Florence, Piazza della Signoria, Loggia dei Lanzi.





Fig. 5: Giovanni da Bologna (Douai 1529-1608 Florence), called Giambologna, Rape of a Sabine, 1581-82, marble, height 410 cm, Florence, Piazza della Signoria, Loggia dei Lanzi.







Kern picks up on the idea of the *figura serpentinata*. As a subject he chooses a scene from the Hercules myth seldom depicted – the hero's struggle with the queen of the Amazons, Hippolyta.

Admete, Eurystheus' daughter, asks her father for an unusual present, the magic belt worn by the Amazonian Queen Hippolyta. Eurystheus assigns Hercules with the task of stealing the belt as the ninth of his Twelve Labours. Hippolyta had been given the belt by her father, Mars, the God of War. However, when she comes face to face with the famous Hercules she is overwhelmed and willingly hands him the belt. The goddess Juno then steps in: Hercules cannot possibly be allowed to solve the task he had been set so easily! Disguised as an Amazon she lets Hippolyta's fellow warriors believe that Hercules is going to kidnap their queen. The Amazons then attack Hercules and his followers to rescue the queen. Hercules kills many of Hippolyta's faithful and takes her sister, Melanippe, hostage. As a ransom for his prisoner, Hippolyta then gives Hercules the magic belt. All 'Twelve Labours of Hercules' were depicted in antiquity in the metopes around the Temple of Zeus in Olympia and later cited time and again by major artists. The episode with the Amazonian Queen Hippolyta is, however, seldom found. Its choice underlines Kern's penchant for less conventional subjects.

As is the case of Giambologna's *Rape of a Sabine* on which Kern models his work, his own sculpture *Hercules and Hippolyta* presents a different aspect from different perspectives.

Taking a powerful stride forward Hercules lifts Hippolyta up onto his shoulder while holding her in a clinch. Hippolyta defends herself with her arms stretched upwards as far as possible without wanting to harm her assailant. The graceful, elegant position of her hands contrasts with Hercules' masculinity and brute strength. Hippolyta's left arm, on which a shield with a ram's head is strapped, forms an artistic finishing point to the figure while carrying the dynamics of the work upwards.

Hercules strides across the Amazon, Alcippe, who is cowering on the ground with her legs drawn up to her chest. With a last gasp the defeated warrior tries to stand up, a battleaxe in her right hand, her left hand holding on fast to a war bow. Like her two feet, her head and single strands of her wavy hair hang over the side of the baseplate.

Although Kern had Giambologna's *Rape of a Sabine* in mind, he creates a completely different figure group. Hercules is taking an energetic stride forward and, despite the fact that the figure can be viewed from multiple angles, one 'display' viewpoint becomes evident. While in Giambologna's work the female figure lies helplessly in the assailant's arm, Kern's Hippolyta tries to wriggle her way out of Hercules clasp and yet appears to hover gracefully and weightlessly in his arms at the same time. While in Giambologna's case the aggressor's fingers dig into the Sabine's skin, Hercules' hand lies partly in the folds of Hippolyta's robe. She is wearing a garment that has slipped from her shoulder, only held in place above her bosom by a ribbon.



The two Amazons embody a type of woman that is repeatedly found in Kern's work, characterised by delicately executed faces with straight noses, heavily pronounced bulging eyes, carefully modelled ears and slightly opened mouths. The modelling of their hair is particularly detailed, as is the case with the Amazon Hippolyta as well. Her thick locks in which a diadem is fixed, are elaborately coiffed and held in place by a hair band. As if by chance, several strands have detached themselves. The same ideal of womanhood can be found in *The Three Graces* in Stuttgart (Landesmuseum Württemberg, figs. 6, 7). The artistic and detailed modelling of Hippolyta's sandals, typical of those found in antiquity with close fitting soles, is characteristic of Kern's work.

Fig. 6 and detail: Leonhard Kern, *The Three Graces*, c.1640, ivory, height 31.6 cm, Stuttgart, Landesmuseum Württemberg, inv. no. 1981-5.























Fig. 7: Hercules Farnese, Roman copy after a Greek original of the Early hellenistic era, made for the Baths of Caracalla in Rome, marble, height 317 cm, Naples, National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 6001

Compared to other males figures sculpted by Kern, Hercules is conspicuously modelled on works from antiquity. His extremely muscular body is reminiscent of an ideal anatomy, as in the case of the *Farnese Hercules* (fig. 7), one of the most famous figures from antiquity. Kern probably saw this figure of Hercules when in Rome where it had stood in the Palazzo Farnese since 1556,<sup>16</sup> or at least knew it from the many drawings and prints of it.

<sup>16</sup> Haskell/Penny 1981, no. 46, p. 229ff.







Fig. 8: Leonhard Kern, Christ the Redeemer, c.1614, alabaster with traces of gilding, height 36.5 cm, Frankfurt a.M., Liebieghaus Skulpturensammlung, inv. no. 2386.

Hercules' ideally modelled body underlines the 'strong hero' type of man. Kern's works of an early date, however, generally show a more pronounced modelling of the naked body in the style of the classical ideal. This includes the detailed depiction of muscles with taut sinews and an underlying skeleton. A similar modelling of the body can be found in the figure of *Christ the Redeemer* in a relief in the Liebieghaus in Frankfurt (fig. 8). The relief has been dated to around 1614 and is also made of alabaster. The muscular torso, arms and legs are comparable to those of Hercules. In Kern's later works, such as in *Adam and Eve* (1645-1646)<sup>17</sup> or the *Expulsion from Paradise* in Hamburg,<sup>18</sup> a different artistic approach can be discerned. Kern depicts less idealised physical proportions as well as flaccid muscles and skin that he had probably seen on live models.



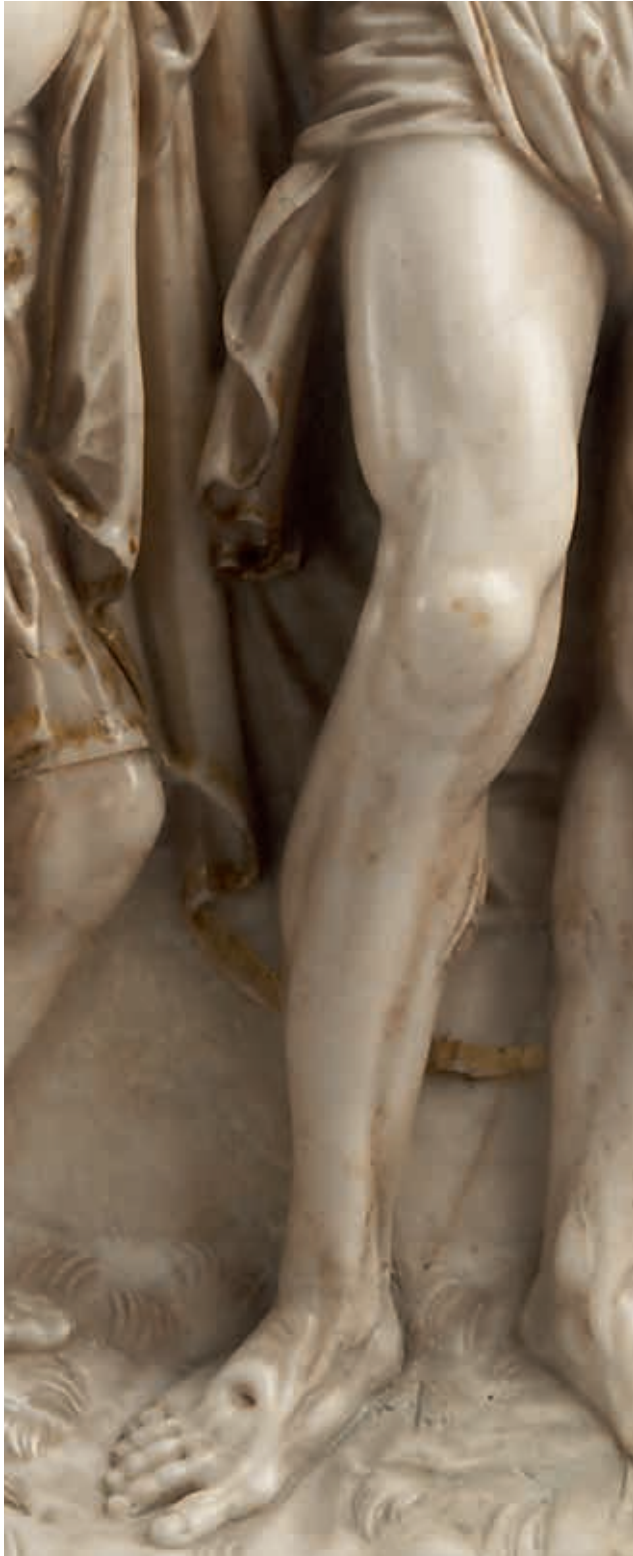


Fig. 8 detail: Leonhard Kern, Christ the Redeemer,  
c.1614, alabaster with traces of gilding,  
height 36.5 cm, Frankfurt a.M.,  
Liebieghaus Skulpturensammlung,  
inv. no. 2386.



Detail: Leonhard Kern, Hercules and Hippolyta,  
c.1615-20, alabaster, height 82 cm.

<sup>17</sup> Grünenwald 1969, cat. no. 9, plate 27.

<sup>18</sup> Spenlé 2016, fig. 29.



Fig. 9: Leonhard Kern, Adam and Eve in Paradise, c.1614–1620, alabaster, 30.5 x 22 cm, Munich, Kunstammer Georg Laue.

Hercules' hair is a mass of thick, artistically twisted curls, comparable to other early works in Kern's œuvre such as that of the figure of Christ in Frankfurt, Nicodemus in his *Lamentation of Christ* or of Adam in the work *Adam and Eve* (fig. 9), both verified as dating from around 1614-1620.<sup>19</sup> The heads of the angels in the 'Christ the Redeemer' group in Frankfurt, dated to around 1614, are also similar.

<sup>19</sup> Both Munich, Kunstammer Georg Laue, published in Spenlé 2016, figs. 4 and 5.

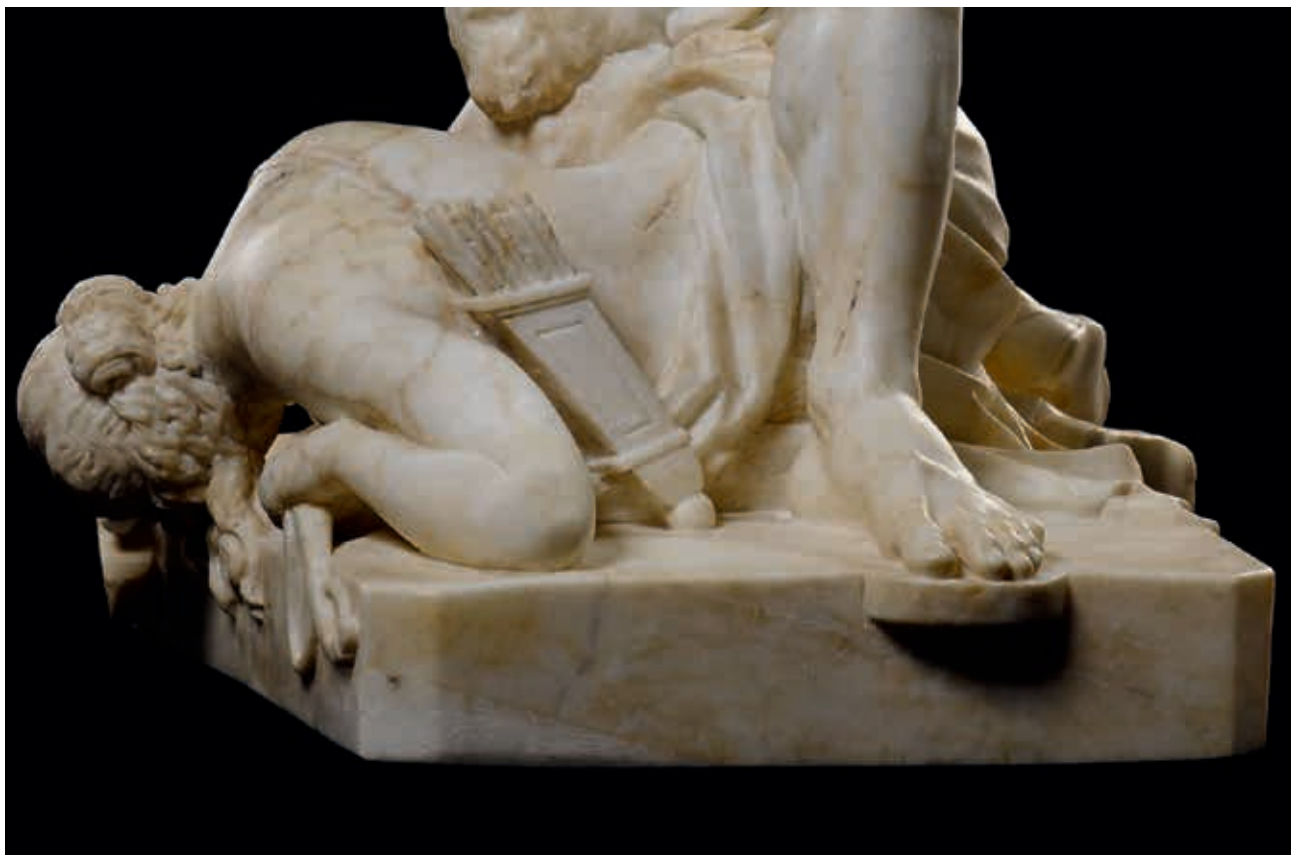








Another typical characteristic of Kern's sculpture is the projection of part of the body beyond the limits of the plinth, as is the case with Hercules' foot and the dying Alcippe's head, arm and feet. Even her robe falls loosely over the edge and is modelled close to the base.







## Leonhard Kern in Heidelberg

In 1613 Frederick V (1596-1632), Elector Palatine, starts making preparations in Heidelberg for his marriage to the princess Elisabeth Stuart of England and Scotland. The castle is to be enlarged by an 'English Wing'. Numerous internationally renowned artists and architects are attracted to the palace on the Neckar. Leonhard Kern is also engaged to contribute to this major artistic and architectural project. In Kern's obituary it reads: "Her Serene Electoral Highness created the appropriate conditions for him from the beginning."

His work must have met with approval as we know that, soon afterwards, he is recommended to the City of Nuremberg in 1617 by the master builder Peter Carl<sup>20</sup> who is also working on the 'English Wing'. Kern receives a commission for sculptures on the gable of the municipal hall in the free imperial city.



Fig. 10: Frederick V (1596-1632).

It must have become known that Kern had also studied Michelangelo's works in Italy as when the goldsmith Christoph Jamnitzer (1563-1657) of Nuremberg is working on drafts for the portal of the City Hall modelled on Michelangelo, Kern is commissioned to execute these designs. For the first time the sculptor has to prove his mastery of the monumental format as well<sup>21</sup>.

Following the successful execution of the gable figures Kern is highly praised as "an artistic and swift-working sculptor worthy of praise and honour".<sup>22</sup> From the Nuremberg Chronicles it is known that he was only 'lent out' to Nuremberg from his other services in the Electoral Palatinate.<sup>23</sup> It is to be assumed that other commissions awaited him in Heidelberg. In any case, the artist makes preparations to move to Heidelberg in 1618 with his wife and children.

It is possible that there is a conscious connection between the subject of Hercules and the Heidelberg Elector. The marriage of Frederick V with Elisabeth Stuart was welcomed as a 'Protestant alliance' with a large celebration prepared for the couple including a triumphal procession. It is noteworthy that the Palatine electors trace their descent from King Almann, the 'Teutonic Hercules'<sup>24</sup>. Under Otto Henry, Elector Palatine (1502-1559) and Frederick IV (1574-1610), 'Hercules Palatinus', as he was called, is incorporated in the iconography of the ruling dynasty and included in the architecture of Heidelberg Castle. Frederick V added the ancient myth of Hercules to the design of the palace garden, the 'Hortus Palatinus'. Based on plans made by the French Huguenot Salomon de Caus, the garden is one of the most important landscaped parks at any royal court in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Ten reliefs depicting the 'Labours of Hercules' were to have decorated the Great Gallery above an upper floor supported on ornamental columns. Whether the design, known from a copperplate engraving,<sup>25</sup> was ever executed, remains unanswered.<sup>26</sup>

After the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War and the crowning of the Elector Frederick V as King of Bohemia in 1619, Heidelberg's heyday as a centre of the arts comes to an end. Frederick V, who entered history as the 'Winter King', is deprived of his title and lands after just a short rule through an imperial edict. The work on Heidelberg Castle remains unfinished; the garden and its architectural elements left to decay. Today, only a small section remains as a reminder of the once magnificent park.



It is tempting to assume that Kern created this figure group as a commission for the Elector Frederick V within the context of the Hercules iconography at the court of Heidelberg. The work's exceptional size for an alabaster sculpture and the *serpentinata*, an artistic style much discussed at that time and one that Leonhard Kern – as one of very few German artists – knew from first-hand experience, speak in favour of this theory. Even if Florence is not mentioned in Kern's obituary as a place he visited, the sculptor's œuvre incorporates "so many influences from Florence ... that ... it can be assumed with certainty that he stayed there, especially considering that his itinerary allowed him sufficient time."<sup>27</sup> In our opinion, the figure group *Hercules and Hippolyta* provides almost certain evidence of Kern's stay in Florence. It is also not unusual that he did not make an exact copy of an existing work but his own personal interpretation of the motif, adapted to suit his client.

As no further commissions could be expected from Heidelberg, Leonhard Kern settles in Schwäbisch Hall.<sup>28</sup> This turns out to be a lucky choice as the strongly fortified town is less effected by passing troupes during the Thirty Years' War than many other places.<sup>29</sup>

In Hall Kern becomes a successful sculptor of ivory statuettes and vessels. As enterprising as he is, he regularly travels to Regensburg, Augsburg and Nuremberg, to Imperial Diets<sup>30</sup> and church gatherings to sell the stocks of works he builds up in advance to electors, wealthy townspeople and 'noble Lutheran dignitaries'.<sup>31</sup> In 1648, at the age of 60, one of his last trips takes him to the court of Frederick William, Elector of Brandenburg (1629-1688) who lives in Cleves. For Kern, this journey is well worthwhile as he is appointed 'sculptor to the court' while being allowed by the elector to return to Hall where Kern works 'diligently' up until his death.<sup>32</sup>

The rediscovery of this alabaster figure group adds a major work to Leonhard Kern's œuvre. As already mentioned, Kern worked unusually often in alabaster after returning from Italy, having already gained considerable experience with this material at an early age in the family workshop which had access to its own source of alabaster. The size of our figure group is surprising and demonstrates his ingenious handling of this material. No other works reference his time at the court in Heidelberg – this makes *Hercules and Hippolyta*, that may well have been made for the palace there, all that more important.

<sup>20</sup> Grünenwald 1969, p. 9. note 29.

<sup>21</sup> "Uf das mundlich furbringen, daß ein frembder bildhauer von Haidelberg hie ankumen, welcher von Christof Jamitzer & Hansen Carl sehr gerumet werde ... ist befohlen, ... ihme in der steinhütten bei der carthausen ein prob mit einem bild machen lassen." Gradmann 1917, p. 195, doc. no. 55d.

<sup>22</sup> „Ein Kunstlicher geschwinder Bildhauer, Alles lobt und Ehren, werth.“, Gradmann 1917, pp.196-76, Dokument 55f.

<sup>23</sup> "Ist er Kern den 6 Augusti Ao 1617 von hinnen wider hinweg, und nach heydelberg, weil er von demselben, Pfalzgraffen und Churfürsten, nur vf etliche wochen war hieher geliehen worden." Cited after Gradmann 1917, doc. no. 55f

<sup>24</sup> Cf. for the wedding celebrations and the 'Teutsch Hercules' Hubach 2013, S. 205-242, esp. Page 206

<sup>25</sup> In 1620 a book was published in Frankfurt with the view of the garden as it looked when it was completed so that it would not be forgotten; cf. *Hortus Palatinus. Die Entwürfe zum Heidelberger Schlossgarten von Salomon de Caus, 1620*, with a commentary by Reinhard Zimmermann, 1986 Worms.

<sup>26</sup> Peter Bilhöfer, 'Instrumentalisierung der Antike in der Herrscherrepräsentation des "Winterkönigs" Friedrich von der Pfalz' in Thetis 2000, pp. 117–130.

<sup>27</sup> Grünenwald 1969, p. 13.

<sup>28</sup> "... hätt sich aber wegen entstandenem Krieg in Teutschland von dannen hinweg und anno 1620 den 17. Martij anhero (nach Schwäbisch Hall) begeben und bürgerlich eingelaßen".

<sup>29</sup> Grünenwald 1969, p. 9, note 36.

<sup>30</sup> "In der Hoffnung da Inskünfftige Chur und Fürsten des Reichs eine Zusammenkunfft eine deputation oder Reichs Tag gehalten würde ...", Gradmann 1917, p. 201, doc. 59.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. p. 200, doc. 58.

<sup>32</sup> "... ansehnliche Bestellungen, bey Ihrer Churfürstlichen Durchleucht zu Brandenburg ... angetragen worden hatt ihme iedoch beliebt, biß an sein Todt allhie zu verbleiben ... wo er seiner Kunst biß fast in sein letztere Kranckheit embsig abgewartet, viel trefflich schöne Stück auß Helffenbein, sonderbaren Steinen und gutem Holtz verfertiget, so er mehrernteils in frembde Ort biß in Holland mit gutem Nutzen verkaufft."

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